



The Seventh Seal

Dark-Wave/Gothic Magazine

Issue no 2,

Featuring: Engelsstaub,
Womb,
Voyage

EDITORIAL

Hello again, and welcome to Issue 2 of The Seventh Seal. In this issue, you will find a very varied cross-section of music to be found within the goth/dark wave movement, from ambient to techno, from metal to pop, from very famous to obscure, which in itself allowed for an interesting critique -at least for me, as I set about reviewing them.

Hopefully, the interviews in this issue will be of interest, as well as the artwork and other features. And remember that new contributors, letters, as well as materials to review, will all be warmly welcomed.

This also includes an invitation to all those who would like to be immortalised by the pen of The Poison Quill. Send me in a photo of your good self, and you too, could find yourself rendered in pen and ink within these pages, with maybe even a dark, twisted story to match.

I am also interested in hearing from individuals who live in all different parts of the world: what kind of scene exists for you, where you are?

Once again: you can subscribe directly from me, at

Budapest

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In the UK, my zine is available from Nightbreed and from Resurrection; their contact addresses are listed in the back of the zine. The Seventh Seal is £2.00 in cheque form to me plus IRC, £8.00 for the whole year.

Poison Quill



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Many thanks to Mark Hoffmann from Engelsstaub, Mazan Lazslo from Voyage, Greg from Womb, Brian Stableford and Carol Anne Davis for their contributions.

INTERVIEW WITH VOYAGE

Voyage are an engaging four-piece who hail from Békéscsaba, which is situated on the south east tip of Hungary. My review of their first album, Vogue Again, appears in Issue 1 of The Seventh Seal. Having watched them play live again in Budapest, I decided to ask them a few questions...



I noticed that you played a lot of new material at your last gig in the Voodoo. Is this available on cassette yet, and are you planning to release a new CD?

We'll go to studio within 2 months to record 12 new songs. Of course we've recorded the new stuff to audiotape but it's for band use only. The date of the publishing of the third album will depend on a lot of different things.

The new material you played seemed to be a lot more hard-edged, less depeche-modey. Is this a new change in direction for you?

It's not our aim to make harder material than on the previous one, but I think it would be quite boring if we created the same sound as the 'Vogue again' (1998) has. The guitar sound - which was quite weak on the previous material - is more dominant now, but not harder anyway. Telling the truth the bass sound turned to a more noisy way and perhaps that's the reason why the music seems to be hard.

Most of your supporters in Hungary seem to be Goths. Are you happy to be part of this label, or do you aim to seek out a larger audience, too?

Of course we would like to seek out a larger audience if we want to survive. That's pretty complicated because we are satisfied with the goth supporters but the number of them is so little that to arrange a gig far from your hometown is not profitable. But we won't play another style of music just for earning money or being famous. I think we would find more supporters if we lived in Germany or in England.

Telling the truth I've never really liked the so-called gothic music. I was a very huge fan of the Cure since 1990, but I knew nothing about this movement at that time. This chemistry was so strong - like a religion - that I didn't listen to any other music than the Cure. For me the Cure isn't a gothic band, just a very good pop group with a well-developed image. There were some guys around '90 who were spending a lot of time in the cemetery dancing on graves. But I'm not sure that they could tell you more about the goth scene than I can. Nowadays there're only few people in Békéscsaba who are dressing like goths and listening gothic music. Otherwise I liked the dress culture very much and I used to wear such clothes and make-up for a long time. Later I replaced it by simple black clothes. In the old days we often wore make-up and bushy hair like the Cure, but now I think we are too old to copy these habits. Our average age is 26.

Back to the music - I knew about bands like Bauhaus, Sisters of Mercy, Mission, FON and even listened them in the early 90's but I didn't like them much. From these bands Bauhaus was the biggest influence for me and I like the band better now than in the past. The new wave of the gothic music - I mean the gothic bands of the 90's - didn't affect me at all. I think the opinion of the other band members would be the same as mine. It was Moha who liked more this kind of music than the others. Roland and Felix had periods when they were open to this music, but it wasn't significant. I know this is not the answer to your question, but perhaps I managed to show you that I'm really an outsider to the scene.

What is your musical background? For example, were you, Felix, already able to play the violin, or did you learn after Voyage was formed?

Felix was learning to play the violin for seven years till the age of 14. Then he bought a guitar... Moha learnt to play the classical guitar for 2 years some years ago. He was 16 when he held a guitar for the first time. Roland and I were autodidacts. He used to play guitar since he was 14, then the guitar was

replaced by synthesisers in 1994 when Voyage was formed. I was 17 when I got my first bass guitar.

Which bands/artists do you most admire?

There are a lot of bands/artists, which had serious influences to manipulate our music.

Some of the favourites of the band members are:

-Felix: David Bowie, David Sylvian, DM, Joy Division, NIN, Suede

-Moha: Bauhaus, Sisters of Mercy, The Cure, DM, Pulp, Garbage

-Roland: Erasure, DM, A-ha, U2, Radiohead

-László: Japan, The Cure, Duran duran, Ultravox, Placebo

Have you travelled abroad much? If so, what are your impressions of the goth scene as it exists within other countries?

We had a two dates Italian tour (?) in the Oct of 1998, and an unsuccessful English tour in the summer of 1999 when we were turned back in Dover due to the lack of work permit. That means that we haven't got so many impressions of the foreign goth scene. But I'm sure that the most of the European countries, the USA and Japan have a wide goth scene. I've heard a lot about these scenes from foreign friends and homepage visitors. I think the whole movement is better imaginable in the English, Irish or Scandinavian atmosphere. The circumstances in Hungary make the whole thing a bit strange.

Will you be going to Leipzig this year?

I'm afraid we missed the deadline.

Where would you most like to visit, if you could?

England is one of my favourite countries so it was painful when we were dealt a blow by the border-wardens last year. *(It must have been a bit difficult to convince the officials you are just tourists, if you turn up at the border with a van load of musical instruments! - ed.)* Other places I like to visit are Scandinavia, Japan and China. Felix is strongly interested in boating among the Islands of Oceania.

Now please name three pet likes/dislikes.

It's my personal opinion:

likes: dog, chinchilla, mouse

dislikes: cat, parrot, fish

Now, I want you to feel free to ask me any questions you may have in mind.

What is the goth scene is like in the UK?

That is a good question. Whilst it is certainly true that there are a lot more places to go, nightclubs, bands, clothes shops, especially in London of course, I do think the scene is more limited in some ways. There are certainly a lot more feuds and factions between different groups/outlets: it can all get pretty vindictive, and certainly bitchy at times, but probably this is because the scene is still pretty small, and therefore pretty incestuous. Maybe because the scene is even smaller in Hungary, you haven't encountered this side of things yet, though already there are people complaining, as the events in the Voodoo get bigger, that it is losing its 'family' atmosphere.

There is a tendency to look backwards a little more here with a tear of nostalgia in the eye for the good old days, so everyone is still happy to hear an old Cure number at a nightclub, for example. The thing about the UK, is that it is so important for everyone to be 'cutting edge' and not to be retro in anyway. So there are a lot of hybrid electro/techno bands, where everyone doffs a little rubber and PVC, and of course, you musn't ever take anything too seriously. So if you want to be 'cool' you must be heard to be listening to the 'right' bands, and it does not matter about the quality, just that these bands are deemed to be cutting-edge. I just think that is all very well, but I just do not think that it really works, trying to be original for it's own sake: there is nothing new about electro either, and doesn't techno belong to an old decade now?

I agree that just refusing to ever do anything innovative is boring too, it's just that I think following fashion for fashion's sake is just as inane. I don't care if a new band is retro or innovative, as long as it is done with conviction.

Also the UK scene seems to have become a lot more cliquy since I first left, in the late 90's, which I suspect has a lot to do with the net. So there are lots of gothic newsgroups, where the main topic of conversation may revolve round, for instance, which flavour lollypops taste best. Couldn't really see the point myself, maybe it's something about the lollypops I may have missed... The internet has really taken on over there, amongst goths anyway, must be all those nice freebie servers, and cheap telephone companies!

Do you think we have any chance to break into the English music scene?

You probably could if you went electro-techno, or if you teamed up with a rockabilly cross-over band. So if you are such a UK band and are reading this....try a few more mail order outlets, and UK-based zines too, take a look at my news pages here for those...

Voyage can be contacted via email at fishgirl@freemail.c3.hu



THE PICTURE by Brian Stableford

Once again, Brian Stableford, UK writer of SF and Horror, has an interesting short story for The Seventh Seal. Here, we get to learn about the other side of the picture from Oscar Wilde's original.....

The last chapter of Oscar Wilde's narrative is, of course, a mere catalogue of lies. Dorian Gray did not stab me in a fit of rage and remorse. How could he? I was the custodian of his will as well as his soul - and, for that matter, of his voice. By the time I had achieved that state described in that final chapter Dorian was no more than a carved dummy. He was a consummate work of art, to be sure, but he was a mere doll. He had elected to become unchanging, and that which is unchanging cannot entertain real intelligence or authentic emotion. A man's identity is not an entity, which may or may not change; a man's identity is a product of all the processes of change ongoing within him.

When Dorian wished change upon me and changelessness upon himself he gave me his mind and his heart. It was a bold move, and it was a wise move, but it was the end of his story and the beginning of mine. Oscar Wilde had not quite understood that in 1891; after two years in Reading Gaol he knew better, but he had surrendered his own mind and heart by then and he never committed his discovery to paper.

Some might think that Dorian Gray was the miracle that Basil Hallward wrought, while I was a mere by-product. Dorian was, after all, a handsome man blessed with eternal youth, immune to ageing and the scars of disease. Alone among young men of his era, Dorian could sleep with syphilitic whores and remain untainted, because all his infections were inherited by me. Oscar Wilde, carrying the curse of syphilis within his own body, presumably thought that Dorian had the best of our bargain - but he was wrong. It was - and is - I who am the miracle, and Dorian Gray the by-product.

Paintings have nothing to fear from disease. We do not die, nor do we suffer; we have nothing to fear from change. Had Dorian borne the burden which he passed on to me it would have ravaged him with pain and misery, and ultimately with death - but there is no pain or misery in my world, and art never dies. The march of time, would have been nothing to him but the measure of his decay and destruction, was to me the glory of my evolution, my progress, my transcendence. I began life as an item of representative art, with no greater virtue than accuracy, but as soon as Dorian had made his bargain I began to mature into a modernist masterpiece. I became surreal and futuristic, awesome and sublime. I became the very embodiment of genius, of magic, of power.

When Basil Hallward first painted me, those who saw me had no available

response save to compliment him because he had captured the pleasing appearance of a lovely boy - but no one who saw me now would mistake me for a mere reflection. There never was, nor ever could be, a living man who looked like me. I have gone far beyond mere reflection into the hinterlands of the imagination. I am now the kind of creature that can only be glimpsed in dreams. I am no longer man but overman, heir to all disease and all decay but never to defeat. I alone in all the world am capable of wearing such corruptions proudly, as manifestations of my absolute triumph over death and damnation. I have already lived more lives than any man, and I am immortal; I am still in the process of becoming. I am no mere work of art; I am art itself.

If you stare into my painted eyes - which will follow you through life, not merely into every corner of the room - you may see what human identity really is, freed from the delicate prison of the flesh. I ought not to be here in this attic, covered and kept secret. I ought to be on display, in the National Gallery or the Louvre or the Escorial - but I could not be content with that. In an age of print and photography I ought to be reproduced in millions, so that my simulacrum might hang in every home in the world. I ought to be the property of every man of discrimination, every secular idolater, every connoisseur of the finest arts. It is not immodesty which makes me say all this, but altruism. I could achieve so much more than I have already done, if only I had the opportunity.

I am no longer recognisable, you see, as poor Dorian Gray - nor, for that matter, as any particular individual. As a result of my evolution, I have become a potential Everyman - and Everywoman too. I could take on a far greater burden than I have so far been required to bear. Given the chance, I could take on the responsibility of moral and physical corruption for every single person in the world. It is foolish of the world to let me languish here, when there is so much to be done. It would need another miracle, but miracles are much easier to achieve than you may think; all that it would require is the passionate desire, the sincere wish, the fervent hope.

I could be your redeemer, if you would only let me. I am equipped to accept into myself *all* the sins of humankind. They would not diminish me in the least, for I AM ART! You only have to bring me down from my hiding-place and nail me to the wall, where any and all may come to see me. You only have to reproduce my image on posters and postcards, for anyone to see. Only do these little things and the world's Great Age might begin at last. If you are hesitant, you have only to pause for consideration. It will not take you long to perceive that there is one thing and one thing only that matters. *Release me, and you need never age a single day, nor spend a single moment in regret.* No line will ever mar your face; no reckless act will ever weigh upon your conscience. How can you possibly resist a temptation like that?

Interview with Carol Anne Davis

The following interview had originally been intended for BRV after they sent me this new author's debut, Shrouded, to review, although due to various problems and changes in editorial policy, this never made the light of day. It is therefore presented to you now.

'Shrouded' is based in bedsit-land, and is a lot to do about the warping effects of loneliness on the personality, as two socially-inept individuals form a tenuous relationship with each other. Funeral director Douglas Tate, however, is no harmless eccentric, but a serial killer as well as necrophiliac. Will timid Marjorie and discerning flat mate Simon recognise the danger he presents in time?

This is a nicely macabre hard-boiled thriller infused with touches of Hitchcock and elements of John Fowles circa The Collector. It is possible that Davis went into overkill in trying to find reasons to explain what made Douglas what he is, and there are a lot of happy coincidences at the climax of the tale, but this is still a most entertaining read.

How long did it take you to find a publisher for your debut novel, shrouded?

It felt like decades, but must have taken me four years to find a publisher for Shrouded. Sadly that's not unusual. Most publishers are very conservative and just won't take a chance on a new novelist whose work in dark like mine. I started off by representing the book myself, sending it off and camping hopefully behind the letterbox. I was making a modest living from virtually every other type of writing so selling a novel just seemed a natural progression from this. But though the consensus from publishers was that I had 'real writing talent' no one was prepared to take SHROUDED on.

Then a top literary agent heard about the book and asked to represent it. The agency approached the publishers that I hadn't yet tried and again everyone praised the book but found a reason to say no. One of the rejection letters said 'it was extremely well written but too dark for our crime list ~ too intelligent for our horror list.' They obviously didn't rate their horror fans.

I kept reading that only small independent publishers were taking new novelists on. I said as much to my agent, but I think she still wanted it to go to a mainstream publisher where I'd receive a big advance and she'd get an equally worthwhile percentage. She also wanted to get SHROUDED televised so for a while I dreamed a writer's dreams. But after about two and three quarter years we were no further forward, so I politely asked her to send Shrouded back to me. I then sent it to the Bloodlines crime imprint of a small but well-advertised publisher, the Do-Not press. They bought it after one month and brought it out four months after that.

Did you do a lot of homework into the psychology of serial killers?

I already knew a lot about serial killers when I researched *Shrouded*- but I did have to read up on necrophilia. Luckily there are books about Dennis Neilson, Jeffrey Dahmer and Reg Christie, all famous real life necrophiles. I also studied books on abnormal psychology. I was seriously broke by this stage so used to read them in the academic bookshop then guiltily shuffle out without buying anything.

What sources did you draw upon to paint your picture Douglas Tate?

I used the basic psychological profile of a necrophile to form Douglas. That is, someone who finds difficulty in forming close relationships with living people, who tends to love gadgetry and machinery. Then I worked backwards to what kind of childhood experiences might form a man like this? How might he speak, walk, think, integrate? I don't actually know a Douglas - but I'm sure that very similar men exist.

Is Douglas mostly evil or just sick?

Unfortunately the male psyche (and occasionally the female one) is capable of much worse deeds than Douglas - I saw him as being sad rather than bad...There's a character in *Manhunter*, Thomas Harris's prequel to *Silence of the Lambs* who puts it brilliantly. He's talking about a murdering psychopath and says something like 'I pity the child he was whilst hating the sick f***** that he's become.' I found it impossible to hate Douglas because I showed the cruel socialisation he'd undergone which made him incapable of normal sexual function. But he has the choice to live out his fantasies quietly with the dead and instead opts to steal life from the living so obviously I condemn him very strongly for that-

Isn't Simon a little too good to be true?

I possibly made the character of Simon exceptionally nice, because I didn't want to give the skewed perspective that all men are dangerous - Douglas's stepfather is violent, and Douglas himself goes on to commit murder, so I wanted to have someone kind and protective like Simon to act as a foil to this. Something terrible has happened in the past to Simon's sister and the trauma of it has changed him for the better, has ensured that he's gentle towards women like his flatmate Marjorie, who clearly can't quite cope.

Why the focus on the macabre?

I've always been interested in death, in what happens to our bodies after we no longer have any use for them- making Douglas a mortician gave me the chance to explore all of that. Working morticians kindly showed me around their premises and explained exactly how the bodies were prepared for burial. And I studied medical books, which showed the various stages of decomposition after death. How fast you decay depends on what you died of, the heat, and the moisture in the air, your gender, age and height. These are - to me at any rate - macabre but fascinating facts. I used such images in the book and some of them have lodged in my brain waiting for a sort of Post-mortem version of *Mastermind* - I remember, for example, that the uterus often remains long after the rest of the body has withered because as an organ it has exceptional elasticity.

Is there anything of you in Marjorie?

Well, I was very shy when I was younger, so I identify with the socially-inept Marjorie to that extent- I was also told throughout my childhood, like Marjorie, that it wasn't important for a girl to have an education that all that mattered was finding a good husband and building a home. I've gotten myself educated to postgraduate level, so I guess I always pushed myself harder than Marjorie pushes herself.

What plans do you have for future novels?

I've been working on a novel which features a sexual sociopath- It is - I hope a realistic and unglamorised view of the trauma caused by a serial killer- Then I've plans for a book which features a much more normal man, who, through extreme external circumstances is driven to kill and kill again. I've set up a website so anyone with internet access can read all about *Shrouded* and Future work at <http://www.tellitlikeitis.demon.co.uk> *Shrouded* is available in the crime section of many bookshops both in the high street and on the Internet. It can also be ordered direct from the publisher, The Do-Not Press, PO Box 4215, London, SE23 2QD. Cheques made payable to The Do-Not Press. *Shrouded* costs £7 plus £1.50 postage and packing in the UK or £2.50 postage and packing overseas.

The Stranger on the Train



After a long evening, Judy Peach was pleased to be on the last leg of her fiddly journey home. She heaved her bag across, put away her Walkman, and leant gratefully against the shabby upholstery of the suburban train. A robust heat radiated from the seating under her. Good. The clothes she felt compelled to wear for work – for presenting herself to her discerning clients – did not make for comfort, and certainly did not make for protection against the cold. The frigid late autumn air chilled her unprotected ankles cruelly, insulated as they were, only by her strap high-heeled shoes and tights.

Those tights! The dry, crêpey sensation of them drove her to distraction on some days. And that stupid woollen suit, the skirt always pinning her as she walked, always sliding up past her waist, despite her best efforts to remain tidy-looking, professional and groomed. But work was work, and looks, as she was always told, mattered in her profession: the difference between keeping a firm as a client, or losing them. Judy was a conscientious employee; she wanted to do her best. She wanted to look the part.

Opposite her by the window, sat a middle-aged woman with thick glasses, hair pulled back in a rigorous bun, frown deepening as she remained engrossed in a paperback. Judy took care not to move too close to her. Things were not too bad though, it was by no means rush hour at this time of the evening. Judy did not have to fight for a seat against the seething mass of other commuters. It was not like the grisly morning exodus to the city centre either, where slow-moving crowds herded like sheep into the over-used tube trains, too crammed together to move with any freedom at all: gross.

Unfortunately, even now the train was filling up. A large woman with a copiously large bag took an entire seat, not far from where Judy sat, then a young man oozed over to sit opposite Elizabeth, despite the fact that he could still have chosen a totally unoccupied space. *Shit*. Judy however, could have taken an instant dislike to the young man, even if he hadn't started to impinge on her personal space, as most commuters were wont to do. He had a furtive look

about him, and the zip to his trousers was undone. Surreptitiously, Judith watched him adjust his trousers, via his reflection in the window.

The lights above the door bleeped, and the train began to ease its way out of the terminus. Soon, she would hear the comforting litany of the names of all the stations she must pass before her stop, and soon she would be home, getting ready her last meal of the day before bed.

Somehow, however, she could not feel comfortable. The young man sitting opposite her was proving to be a highly selfish commuter. He was leaning forward as though sleeping, his eyes almost, but not totally shut; Judith could sense this, as there was still an almost feral gleam to them, reflected in the mirror. He sat with his legs apart, reminding Judy with considerable distaste, of those dogs which tended to sprawl on their backs in front of their owners, displaying the whole of their genitals. His legs were also splayed in such a way that somehow, his right foot managed to pin both of her ankles. In fact, the tip of his foot was pressing against the inner part of her calf, her foot, quite snugly, as though seeking out the aching discomfort of having stood for so much of the day. It was uncomfortable for her, to have the weight of this stranger encroaching against her. Surely, it could not be deliberate.

Or could it? Could she be she was being paranoid, she asked herself, as she studied her unwelcome companion through the corner of her eyes, at his reflection again. Something about commuting each and every day, at such antisocial hours, did sometimes play tricks with her mind, or so it seemed to her. What about the time she was on the tube last week, when she became convinced two of the men in the car, were staring at her? Of course, it had to be paranoia. She surely did not stand out that much from the crowds, after all.



Her study of the young man told her that he was older than he first seemed. He was so short and wiry in build that at first, Judith would have taken him for someone not even fully-grown, fifteen at most. However, the very well established five o' clock shadow discernible on his profile and the excessive proliferation of thick, almost furry hairs springing from his exposed wrists, had to make him at least ten years older than that. His head with its thick and shaggy dark hair seemed a little large in proportion to the rest of his body, his sloping brow almost Neanderthal. Possibly, he was a midget; he looked as though he

could even have been a jockey. Whatever the case, something almost menacing seemed to emanate from him, an almost solid core of malignity.

Oh come on Judy, get a grip. Imagining things again.

It had to be her imagination, that when she tried to shift her legs away from him, his almost immediately followed, pinning her still further against the corner. There was not a great deal of room; Judy had quite long, slim legs. She would have been hard pressed to have moved much further back, at all. Not without disturbing that nice, respectable woman, almost sitting opposite her. What would she think of her, if she suddenly stood up, or make a fuss? Why, she would think she was mad, of course. Making it all up.

Now the stranger opposite had the full weight of his leg, leaning against her calf. He shifted as though to adjust himself a little; stroked the hollows of her ankles, the inside of her calf, with a lingering sensitivity, gentle, soothing. In its way, it did feel very pleasant. Once again, it reminded Judy of just how cramped and achy her limbs did feel from standing all day. She recognised in fact, that a good part of her, did not want this massage, however uninvited, to finish. She asked herself, how this almost sub-human looking specimen with such an aura of unregenerate evil, could understand this deep need within her for intimate touch, from which she had not known she was so starved.

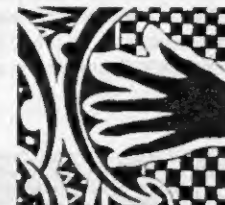
It could not be allowed to go on, though. Judy sat bolt upright, noisily and emphatically shifting her bag. She was rewarded. The man's leg withdrew a little.

Judy allowed herself to look at him directly. Hooded eyes appeared blandly unseeing. Maybe he did not know he was doing it. She did not want to falsely accuse him. She was not sure she really wanted to call the attention of the guard. Everyone in the car would then not only recognise by her voice that she was a foreigner, which would be absolutely terrible, they would all know she was a trouble-maker too, falsely accusing one of their own of filthy, unspeakable acts against her innocent person.

She certainly found him quite repulsive. In the mirror again, she could now see the tip of his tongue, protruding from somewhat over-sized teeth. It seemed to be an unusually ruddy tongue, moving restlessly over his lips like a fat, though unusually agile, worm. The reflection appeared to distort the image, so that at times it appeared to be forked: of course, Judy knew that this could not be.

Now the young man's fingers appeared to begin to wander. These too, she noticed with a fascination borne of revulsion, seemed to possess an almost bestial quality. His fingers, like the rest of him, were abnormally hirsute, and unusually squat. They jiggled against his own thigh as another station came and went, as though he was impatient to see the end of his destination. Funny then, how his fingers, somehow managed to accidentally against Judy's knee, as the train swayed over a particularly bad stretch of rail. Funny again, how the tip of his finger found the most sensitive hollow of her knee, pressing gently against it,

withdrawing, then returning. It just felt so good: yet again, Judy found herself, against her better nature which knew she was being abused, if indeed abuse it was, and still not a figment of her overwrought commuter's imagination, craving the stranger's sly, insidious groping. She knew that it would be in her best interests to move to an unoccupied seat now, as she had already given the young man the benefit of the doubt for too long. She had to get herself out of this!



Then something happened, which finally removed all possible doubt, that all this could be a figment of her imagination. Suddenly the man moved his hand with lightning speed, to the upper part of her thigh. With his other hand, he pulled her head towards him, and, swinging her leg apart, leant forward from his seat as if in supplication, then thrust the full front of his body against her. She felt her skirt snag and tear as it gave to accommodate his iron grasp.

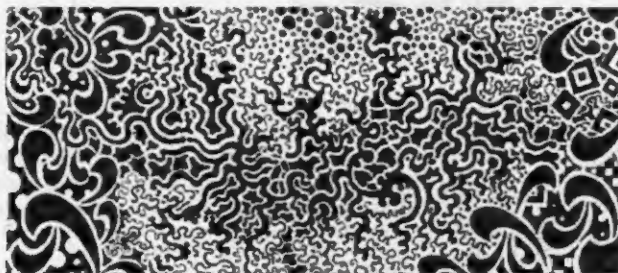
Judy could feel her heart begin to thud painfully, her hands to tremble. She stared wildly at the middle-aged woman, terrified of what she might think of her. Her companion, however, seemed to be oblivious. She was determinedly focussed on her book, to the exclusion of anything external at all, as far as Judy could judge.

The young man did not let her thigh go, but it seemed at this precise point, that restraint was the only thing he had in mind. He pulled her head closer to his, snout and lips seeking out the hollow of her throat; in fact, she bit back a hysterical laugh, as the rough bristles of his face, for a moment, tickled her unbearably. She could now hear the beat of his heart, the rasp of excited breath, and the smell of him...which was quite something else. Rank, goatish, making her want to retch.

The hair was carefully parted from the nape of her neck; wet tongue and putrescent breath grazed her ear, found the sensitive top of vertebrae, and began to lick gently, until the agonising sensation of needle-sharp teeth, without warning, sliced into the back of her skull, in an excruciating, yet delicious wave of agony....

It was over almost as quickly as it started. Somehow the teeth were just as quickly disengaged, something warm and viscous licked away, then Judy was pulled to her feet and in a whirled daze, led to the door, and pushed out at just the right stop for the short walk to her flat.

Many weeks later, Judy was travelling late home from work again. She had spent some time away from work, because of an unfortunate virus she had contracted. Violent vomiting, a vertiginous fever and terrible cramps in her neck and joints accompanied by a great intolerance to bright light, had seemed to leave her floating between life and death for at least a week, although her landlady had assured her that it was only a bad flu. She had not entirely bought this. It was something about the sly looks exchanged between her landlady and the doctor, when she had weakly and inexpertly, in what little she knew of their secretive, enigmatic tongue, tried to question them about what was really wrong with her.



She was a lot more cautious in sizing up whoever sat near her whenever she commuted now, especially late at night, and she now carried a personal alarm in her bag. She also, no longer wore high-heeled shoes with insubstantial tights; now, she wore sensible shoes with thick soles, and well-made trousers kept her legs hidden from view. She no longer cared about what her employers thought of her image at work.

She was still not totally sure that she had not somehow, totally imagined what had happened to her, although there were certain signs, that she had not. She played her Walkman everywhere she travelled, sometimes at full blast. Judy knew that the sense that the music somehow insulated her against the full onslaught of the rest of the world was an illusion, but that did not stop her from playing it whenever she could. Besides, the music often seemed to stir deep sensations and longings within her innermost being, feelings which, it seemed to her, had been submerged for many years. They made her want to discard not just some, but all the trappings of her old job and lifestyle and to run, to simply run into the night, the brightness of the stars and the moon.

She suspected that she now frightened her clients. This was a quite new experience for Judy, who had never particularly perceived herself as possessing any real strength or power. Hadn't she always been considered to be something

of a mouse at work, for example? Now however, her clients seemed to be unwilling to meet the intensity of her eyes, as though they knew she could see beyond whatever corporate surface they wished to project, but to something deep and precious within. Something, which they somehow divined she coveted, with a speculative and greedy stare.



Judy Peach still believed that it was important not to give herself away whenever in full view of the public eye, although she had never been sure of what it was she had been so afraid of revealing to others. Now, however, once more on the way home, she found herself once again drawn to the sight and smell of a complete stranger. She found, for example, could not keep her eyes off the boy who sat next to her. So fresh and innocent he seemed, so wholesome, new and clean. She felt as though she wanted to press her face against where the firm, strong angle of his jaw met the delicate hollow of his white, soft throat, just above the collar bone, chew her way into the vigorous fountain of his youthful marrow. Her tongue pressed against her palate, sore now from newly-erupting teeth at the back. One of her front teeth, meanwhile, found an itchy spot, just at the front of her tongue. She could not bear to leave it alone. She was not sure that this could really be, but it was almost as though her tongue was mutating, like the rest of her entire being, developing some kind of a strange new split....

INTERVIEW WITH ENGELSSTAUB

Engelsstaub first made their mark with their debut full-length Malleus Maleficarum in 1993, creating their own, very unique blend of industrial/gothic dark folk. It was followed up and bettered by their second album, Ignis Fatuus: Irrlichter. Now their sound has evolved again, into an even darker, mystical sound. Mark Hoffmann, plays a leading role in the band, as well as working as part of the record label Apollyon, finally found time to answer my questions.....



I notice that on the CD cover you have a nice picture of an eclipse of the Sun. Does the eclipse of the preceding year have any mystical significance for you? Did you see the eclipse at all, and it have any special significance for you?

Yes, we saw the eclipse, but the total eclipse just on the TV because in our region we had coverage of around 92%. In lore this event is always linked to apocalyptic prophecies because people didn't understand what this stands for as it creates a very diffuse atmosphere. For us it was a unique event and a proof for cosmic powers on which mankind has no influence. Powers which can do to us what they want, a proof of the weakness of mankind. Choosing the image for the cover comes from the atmosphere this event creates for a certain time by its energy

because everything 's different to we're used to but it's still reality. And so is "Anderswelt", another reflection or point of view of reality.

The title of your new album is Anderswelt. Is this an artistic vision, or do you have any intentions in altering the consciousness of your listeners?

Anderswelt is a summary of the literature we have read, a diary of our experiences we have made during the last 2 years, so it is not an artistic vision. This personal experience becomes public with its release. When it is released we are there for communication with everyone who is prepared to communicate with an open mind and the spirits. It is not our aim to alter anyone but if someone gets inspired by our reflections, that's great.

Your earlier albums seem a lot darker than this most recent one, apart from within tracks such as The Kingdom of Blindness. Now you allude to the world of Faerie, and to visions of a world of spirit. Is this due to the influence of new members within Engelsstaub, or to something specific that has happened to you in the last 5 years, since your last release?

First, there is no new member in the band. Since 'Malleus Maleficarum' the set-up remains the same. And as I just said, the spiritual evolution we have been gone through is the basis of Anderswelt. Most of the songs reflect a specific experience, some are a summary of experiences, always in reflection and work on the literature.

What beliefs do all of you from Engelsstaub hold?

Janusz's basis for his belief is the catholic religion. He's educated this way. Silke and I, we're atheists, that means we don't believe in any of the world religions. We believe in the individual and in our spiritual power. We are not personalising cosmic powers in any kind of gods or goddesses.

What do you think of New Age music, and would you compare yourselves to this genre in any way?

No, we don't compare ourselves to this genre. I don't think that New Age music is serious. It's a (commercial) brand for music that doesn't fit into one of the genres like Pop or Rock etc. Those musicians can compose relaxing or ethereal music but they are not able to do this spiritually, that's the important point. Their scheme are limited to the "ordinary" way of composing, they don't follow the spirit which is definitely there.

You call your music 'world music' in your brochure. What do you mean by this exactly?

I haven't found a suitable translation for the term we use in German, 'Weltenmusik', which means music of the worlds - the manifested world, the spiritual world, dreams included.

How did the interest in Amerindian culture emerge for you, and what other ethnic influences have formed the influence of Anderswelt?

The interest on the American Natives came through our studies on dreams. In today's life, in our "modern" society, dreams don't play a significant role. But this is different in the lives of people who are linked to their Native fathers and of people who find themselves in harmony with the earth and nature.

Even if the meaning of dreams differ from crowd to crowd, the meaning of dreaming is the most important experience in the Native Americans' individual life. In dreams they receive visions and they heal. A dream opens channels for the communication with other living things and life forms.

And so is Dreamcatcher, the first song. It opens the gate to Anderswelt and also acts like the same called Mandala, which filters the bad dreams and just lets the good dreams go through. For the Native American percussion we use HorseHide Drums, Buffalo Drums or Apache Shakers, these are all very "spiritual" instruments because they have a special meaning for the Native Americans. Drums have the meaning of 'skan' - the life force that is within every living thing. Also the drum represents the heartbeat of the Earth. A drum is found at nearly every social and spiritual gathering of people, to punctuate words, thoughts and emotions. All the other ethnic "influences" are there to make the song as authentic as possible in regards to its meaning e.g. in "A Dream Within A Dream" we discuss about a former life which was brought to us through dreams and it was in the Highlands. So we used Scottish instruments like the Bagpipes and the War Drums. For Namiro's we used sacred Tibetan cymbals to communicate with spiritual beings, to evoke them, or to welcome them, speaking with vibrations.

I do not have a biography on hand, so do not know - are Lilith, from your first album, and Silke, whose vocals presumably shape your new album to such a degree, one and the same?
You're right, Silke was formerly known as Lilith and she is now the main vocalist as you can hear.

Did you really manage to cram bagpipes, Apache shakers, horsehide drums and an orchestra into the studio all at once, to create this album?

No, we didn't bring them all together in our studio. I have collected a huge sound library for my samplers (instrument). Most of it I programmed with a sequencer programme, some of the pieces were recorded directly on hard disc. But all was created with real instruments.

Do you see any conflict between using traditional instruments and working with everything that computers and programmers have to offer?

No, there isn't a conflict. It's more a gift, otherwise "Anderswelt" wouldn't sound like this because we would have had to look for musicians and the instruments. This would have cost a lot of time, money and patience. Computers also make the

work much easier. If you have the know-how, realising your ideas is very easy. You can hear tracks all at once without recording, you can change or add lines later if you feel to. There are always so many ideas around in the process of mixing.....

Are you more a studio band, or do you prefer live performances?

We're more a studio band. In our own studio we can create the mood we need because the conditions and the surrounding are always the same or we can have influence on it. Playing live is a nice experience, but we know from the past that with each place to play the acoustics are different, even if we provide a technical rider.

Do you have many gigs planned for the future?

Right at the moment there are no concrete plans for gigs but we're thinking of a small tour in autumn this year. We have some ideas but we have to see first if we can realise them - and of course the clubs.

Thank you very much for answering my questions!

Engelsstaub have three full

length releases to date: Malleus Maleficarium, Ignis Fatuus, Anderswelt, as well Unholy, which has 6 tracks. Contact them for more information at Apollyon, Altenbauer Str. 27 D 34134 Kassel Germany, email: apollyon.antiphon@jonline.de

POISON QUILL REVIEWS

Lady Morphia - Recitals to Renewal

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Recitals to Renewal is Lady Morphia's first full-length release, and at over 55 minutes, a substantial epic it is too. It focuses on the theme of spiritual renewal, and is highly eclectic in its use of musical instruments, which range from woodwind to timpani, gong and floor drums, as well as choral samples.

It opens with a very Gregorian prologue, but the monastic chanting soon breaks into something far more powerfully orchestral featuring guest female background vocals, threatening whispers in the background, bells and gongs. A very strong opening indeed, mystical.

Sun Spirits which follows, is ballad set against folky guitars and a solitary bell, and has the tinniness I would associate

with a Sol Invictus song; Heimat, which follows it, is similar in constitution; each song is well complemented by the strong vocals of Nick Nedzynski.

The Mirror of Shame, however, is the work of his brother, Chris Nedzynski, and is one of the most superbly spooky compositions I have heard in a long time. It features deep cavernous sighs against the sound of dripping water, with a sinister echo that could have come straight from the Marabar caves. Boum.

Wings of Survival is another ballad set against guitar, though the muffled voices in the background, keeps up the rather sinister atmosphere. Beauty's Decay, however, is a slowly-atmospheric track which, with its Buddhist chants, muttered whispers set to lone strings, has an Asiatic feel.

Brothers and Commonwealth are really one song combined, and features the SI or DIJ-type song structure again. I am not too sure these did not go on a little too long, actually, though as this style of music is about a whole genre of dark folk, it would perhaps be strange if it did not feature, well, folky songs.

Palingenesis, however, brings back that spookily sinister atmosphere, through whispers and clock set to spoken Teutonic vocals (which belong to a certain Ernst Junger, to whom much of the message of this album is dedicated). Shades of late Ikon, and very effective! It is followed by Feral Eyes, which is once again a ballad, but balanced yet again, with another experimental, very atmospheric track: Over Ruins. This actually, has strong shades of early

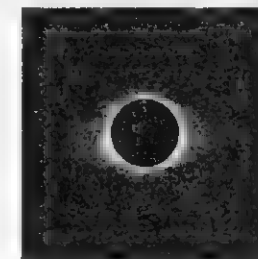
Engelsstaub - creepy echoed voice in unknown tongue, against desolate landscape sounds, running down to a Hal-like death.

The Retreat into the Forest features a baleful cello and other such strings, against a spoken diatribe; and *this* is a device also used to good effect by other artists within the genre, for example Penitent and Zoar.

Parphelia at the Precipice that follows it, is a slow, warmly melodic song, and finally brings a little sentiment to the album. Finally, the epilogue Spero-despero, closes the album, and is an aching piano instrumental, sounding like a scratchy 45. And *this* made me think of early Lacrimosa.

This is a very rich and well-conceived album and whilst it seems moves at a fairly relaxed pace at times, it most certainly deserves to stand side by side along with the best of artists who stand within this category. It is also very refreshing to see a newer, UK-based artist, who is unafraid to move beyond the usual tongue-in-cheek slapstick of so many contemporaries around at the moment.

ENGELSSTAUB - ANDERSWELT
Apollyon Records- email apollyon-antiphon@t-online.de



I had been waiting a long time for this new release by Engelsstaub, so was delighted to be able to get the opportunity to both review, and to interview the band for this edition of The Seventh Seal.

The eclipse of the previous year had clearly left an impression, as one is featured on the sleeve. Here, Engelsstaub describe their music as 'world music:' in making use of instruments as diverse as bagpipes, buffalo drums, piano, synths and orchestra, it is certainly as eclectic as the preceding Lady Morphia, although the latter avowedly has not yet been exposed to Anderswelt.

The accompanying leaflet gives an intriguing illustration to go with each track: fairies with track 5, Dantesque end-of-world imagery for Kingdom of Darkness, medieval icons here, New Age images for The Spirit Awakens. Ambitious.

There is another very important change to the dark-folk style that characterises the early Engelsstaub, and that is the powerful, and angelic vocals of Silke

Hoffmann. These give the whole album the mystical, devotional quality that could remind most listeners of Dead Can Dance, or even more to the point of Love is Colder than Death. Unlike the latter, however, it does not generate into irritating low-key industriality at the end, which to my mind is a great improvement. Anderswelt remains dark, solemn and mystical to the end.

I did rather miss the less well-featured sinister Polish mutterings of Janusz Zaremba, which featured so strongly on earlier oeuvres from this band. Anderswelt seems to possess much greater maturity, and purity, no petulant flirtations with Satanism here.

There are sometimes New-Agey touches, which can jar a little at certain moments. The ensembles of bagpipes and flute on Track 2, and on that of Track 5, Faerieland for example, seemed twee to me, although the mood assuredly quickly darkens into something a lot more sinister in the former case.

The fourth track has a Shamanistic edge with the rhythmic beat of percussional instrument, bells and chanting, whilst much of the old style of Engelsstaub with its underlying rhythms and sinister background choir is more evidence in The Kingdom of Blindness. This also comes across in the quirky, Gregorian-like accompaniments of the next track, Die Erlösung.

I was less enchanted with the 8th track, which as ballads featuring male vocals, seemed to be a bit of a dirge. It all ends well, as the last track brings the return of the Shamanistic chanting, doomy bells in the background. Majestically powerful.

Actually, I would recommend this album less to Engelsstaub fans, who might have first been drawn to the likes of Death in June, Sol Invictus and the like, but to those who like the kind of female-fronted dark folk, already mentioned here.

DARK BEAT RECORDS

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For quite some time, I had been wondering what all the fuss was all about. All the bands here, are very much in the vanguard of the hyped cutting edge of brit goth music, only sanitised into something with more purported street cred. Most of you at home will have seen these reviewed - well, here they are again, only from another perspective: and here is an introduction for you, if they still have yet to reach your shores, wherever you are...

NEKROMANTIK - FAIRY CATCHER

Better hurry if you want to catch this one - it is soon to be deleted, and the old members are onto new things (cutting-edge, sound things, of course..)

There are some lovely titles: Children go Bang, Girlstickboy and the like. (Oooh, sick!) There is some lovely choice of lyric matter too: Shift the Fulcrum for instance, is all about committing suicide; My Bleeding Hands, and Saturnalia are about Satanism, but hey, it's tongue-in-cheek.

The music itself is a sort of hybrid of eighties-Electro goth, transplanted onto 90's industrial-Electro rhythms, with touches of techno thrown in for good measure (more noticeable in tracks like Choke, for example). The vocals,

meanwhile, remind me of Suspiria, and are actually pretty good, although I suspect the vocalist would not like to be thus compared; I liked the style of these better than I did the keyboards, which seemed a little scratchy to me. Track 6, incidentally, also was very Suspiria-like in general rhythm, and just as boppy.

There is the instrumental organ track, providing some tongue-in-cheek vaudeville, whilst the insect song is, well, creepy, and shows what these guys can do if they want to be really mean and moody.

What can I say? It all seems very gothic to me, both in the imagery used, in subject matter, and in style. There is a lot of spiky attitude displayed here; I think bands like Nekromantik are more about rediscovering the original post-punk edge, rather than necessarily creating anything new.

NARCISSUS POOL - LIFE'S BITCH TAPESTRY



Now this is a lot more mellow than the afore-mentioned, at least musically-speaking; there is greater use of guitars; from a dance point of view, it is a lot more accessible, at least with tracks such as the opening one, For Porno Use Only. Tracks such as Parishioner White's

Stormtroopers and Narcissist are very dancy too, airing very techno-style synths. Track 6 is probably even more dance-friendly though, with its more driving rhythms.

The industrial touches are more noticeable; in the tracks Odium Absolute and in My Superiority for example, there are some very Rosetta-like touches, and in what appears to be Track 11, which is well powerful; the track numbering is a little confusing, so am not sure where this belongs.

It will be interesting to see in which direction this band will go, following this release. There are some belting good tracks on this album and lots of clever ideas, though at the moment the effect is still a little patchworky. This is perhaps because the samples tend to render the flow of it all a little stilted in places, at least for me.

The lyric matter follows quite goth themes of revenge and betrayal, and appears to be coming from highly personal experiences, though Parishioner White's Nazi Stormtroopers seems to be a little more political. Nothing wrong with that, but I have to say that the running commentary quickly palled for me, as it did on the Nekromantik album: let the lyrics speak for themselves, please.

FAITHFUL DAWN - YOU ARE HERE

You are Here launches straight away into the vary dance-friendly Substance, a track which to my mind bears a more than passing resemblance to a certain version of Rosetta's Adrenaline with, of

course, female vocals. Delusion and Cell, which follows it, is equally upbeat, but the vocalist's style now brings the likes of GhostDance to mind.

Esther and Net.Web reminds us why the Dark Beat contingent wish to be seen as cutting-edge, as 90's influences make themselves very clearly felt in the slick, gadgety synths and rhythms. It works well with Net.Web though: very atmospheric, whilst Lose, which follows it, has a lot of the raw disco energy that evokes New Order. The sixth track seemed rather insipid in comparison, but we are well on track again with the powerful Obsessional Slut, delivered with a pounding techno edge, whilst the following Feline is catchy in a post Soft-Cell way.

The last four tracks but one are boppy, dancy, very much in electro mode, and seemed relatively bland to me; this to my mind, is the besetting sin of a lot of music which veers towards the electro style. The final track, Forever, though, is an acceptable closer.

I would like to see more of the power that comes across in tracks such Substance, Lose and Obsessional Slut in future Faithful Dawn releases. These for me seemed to be possessed of greater conviction and energy, and are therefore more powerful.

TRANSITORY SURFACE CRIMSON DREAMS

This EP is something of a departure in style to the rest of the albums mentioned here, as the purpose seems to be to create something more atmospheric, rather than something made specifically for the dance floor.

Tomorrow, which opens it, has lots of mellow guitar-like accompaniments just discernible within a mellow hodgepodge of melody and drippy keyboards; quite spacy. Zero is similar; the Gitane Demone-type vocals are evocative in an almost eastern way. The next tracks Alterism and Traces, do not stray from the mould much.

The last track Mesmer is a nicely intense bassy instrumental, atmospheric sighing in the background.

The overall effect is gauzy, fuzzy, as those someone does not like the hard-edged clarity of perfect vision any more than hearing.

DISCO 4 THE DEAD - SNEAKY BAT MACHINE



Disco 4 the Dead is the quirkiest and most playfully experimental of all the albums under the Dark Beat umbrella featured here. It also succeeds admirably in what has to be the main aim of the album, which is to get people onto the dance-floor, using a mixture of Industrial-type sampling, techno tricks with treble distortions and rhythms, and general Electro weirdness.

The use of tongue-in-cheek goth clichés is, of course, hard to miss, with titles like Trick or Treat and so on.

Highlights on the CD for me were Boneshaker, which was delivered with more energy and less gimmickry, and Exhume, which had a melancholic Killing Joke feel about it, circa Love Like Blood.

The gimmicks work best on tracks like Kiss the Bats, where the sampling of voices adds to the mock-creepiness of the whole album; the brat voices at the end however, seemed a tad overdone to me.

The other track that stood most out for me, was Little Ghost Lost, which was delivered once more with gusto and panache along with, of course, suitably flat vocal delivery.

SPIRITUAL BATS - SACRAMENT

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Unlike the above-mentioned bands, this 5-track maxi comes from a band, which is as comfortable as could be with traditional goth imagery/musical influences.

The opening track Sacrament straight away features tribal drums, threatening bass, emphatic keyboards and Rozz-Williams-type vocals. Oppressive in style, it can be seen at once that Spiritual Bats owe a great deal to Christian Death, though the strong use of keyboards also brings The Wake to mind.

The next track Reflection of You is similar in style, though the dirty guitars in the background are more noticeable. Lost Souls, which follows, features sinister tritones within the keyboards, and the leaden atmosphere is maintained further through the slowing-down pitch, and anguished guitar chords in the background.

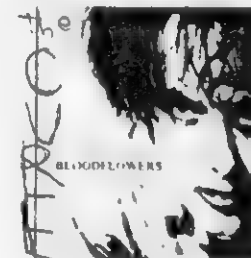
Rituals, which follows, is in very much the same vein, offsetting anguished keyboards against mean guitar/bass chords. Next, Dazzling Lights again emphasises the dirty guitars, and concludes the EP.

They really don't call this style of music 'dark' for nothing in Italy; this is goth within a pretty heavy-duty 80's mould. Sacrament should be a treat for those who are going to miss Rozz Williams (RIP), although it is all a little oppressive for my tastes.

THE CURE - BLOODFLOWERS

Polydor Ltd, copyright Fiction Records

www.thecure.com



The Poison Quill decided to investigate this one, because the gossip was so interesting. His wife had left, I heard. He

is depressed again, I heard. He has gone back into tortured, angst-ridden mode on his new album, I heard.

And *thank God*, was the general sentiment for those who loved his earlier stuff. Before he started producing all that superficial happy-happy drivel, for which so many people never forgave him. Close to Me and the like.

The lyrics are certainly dripping with anguish over the futility of life and love, the impermanence of all things: flowers always die. Robert Smith seems to be taking all the angst of mid-life hard: '39' says it all, really. This latest Cure album undeniably seems to be coming from somewhere very personal; here is another artist, for whom output has to as much therapy as anything else.

Musically, the style of Bloodflowers, really is rather muted: it does not have the exuberance of Disintegration, for example. It is interspersed with short, bittersweet ballads of regret: Where the Birds always Sing, There is no If..., for example.

What Bloodflowers may lack in belting exuberance, it makes up for there with richly extravagant tracks, full of psychedelic effects as well as subtle use of the trademark Cure guitar sequences. The best of these has to be the 11-minute long Watching Me Fall, and is the highlight of the whole album for me. The Loudest Sound has a similar edge of indie decadence, whilst the final title track, Bloodflowers, is as unforgiving as could be. 39 is delivered with more passion, and sounds as though it might have been a remix of Watching Me Fall, originally.

I had a sense of *deja vu* whilst listening to Bloodflowers. There is something very Missionish about the this album, circa Neverland; even the vocals sound less like Robert Smith, but have the odd breathiness of Wayne Hussey.

It certainly goes down very well with most of the Cure fans I know here in Budapest, who liked Smith best at his most melancholy. Like Depeche Mode, the Cure in fact, seem to be idolised a lot more abroad than at home, even though they reached greater commercial status in the UK.

This is an accomplished album by a seminal band, and therefore it is not to be missed.

DAWN OF OBLIVION - HAUNTED
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Sweden email m-a.musicart@usa.net

This 4-track EP is a prelude to their forthcoming new full-length, Mephisto's Appealing and includes two remixed oldies - Illusions and November.

I know nothing of Dawn of Oblivion's earlier material, so it is all new to me. The opening track Haunted, features Vernon-style guitars over aggressively-uptempo punk-tinged metal, whilst The Hellfire Sermon, which is next, is more melodic, and recalls The Marionettes, or possible Nosferatu, and has an anthemic feel, making it strong hit material. I found the remix of Illusions, however, rather heavy-going; it seems to be a Manson-type dirge with dirty guitars. November, meanwhile, is suitably sombre, with a quietly sinister opening, with the Vaniyan vocals featuring heavily again.

Nothing to set the world alight regarding originality, but this should go down very well among devotees of this particular sub-genre.

**ANGEL CHILD
COMPILATION 4**
Musicart Records



Yet another showcase of what is happening overall within the goth scene globally, this compilation is intended to show the variety of subgenres, which exist within the genre as a whole. It opens with the very engaging Star Industry's Nineties, and they appear to be Belgium's answer to The Merry Thoughts. The much heavier Dawn of Oblivion follows with The Hellfire Sermon; see my review above; next comes an offering from This Burning Effigy, with Descent; stately, but a little overlong, I thought; are they trying to be Umbra et Imago now? This Burning Effigy are capable of producing good, moody Neph-style rock, though the quality on their earlier material can seem uneven to me. Mist of Avalon follow with their own brand of Nosferatu-tinged metal goth with a Beltane mix. complete with strained, deep vocals over metallic guitars.

Then along come that arch-Mission take-off, Funhouse, with Voices. I like

Voices, especially the longer version, but couldn't they have given us a taster of something a bit newer? Saints in Hell with their track Autumn Twilight, on the other hand, are totally unknown to me, though the style isn't; this is bog-standard Sisters/Mission stuff, nicely melodic, though the vocals are nothing special to my mind. It is followed by Killing Miranda, which appears to take the heavier elements of goth metal as a starting-point, but this is a lot edgier, with abrupt changes in tempo and rhythm.

Next come Mised, a new talent from Sweden, with Confessions, a vampire song. Next comes The Spares, with Heaven with a Gun; innovative, with a funky edge. The next three tracks, are certainly not innovative: One, from Down Under, however, presents with Be With You, a chugging number of metal-flavoured goth, and will certainly appeal to Meridian fans; Burning Gate's offering, Waxfire, sounds to me a lot like early Dream Disciples, but fronted with Neph-style vocals. Too brash to appeal to the likes of me, I'm afraid. Norwegians Eternal Joy, meanwhile, bring Laziness, featuring melodic gothy guitars, with gentle indie vocals: think Passion Play. Next come Darkside Cowboys, and they are innovative indeed, almost unrecognisable from their earlier Nephilim style: weird. Finally, there is a new talent from Poland, called God's Bow. Hopeful Minds is ambient in style, atmospheric, with angelic female vocals and Gregorian touches: shades of Engelsstaub and DCD.

You won't like everything here, but on the other hand, you are almost certainly bound to make a new discovery of some sort, according to your particular tastes,

if you buy this. Taken all round, this is a very pleasing collection.

THE SPARES - TIRED AND BIZARRE
Musicart



The Spares has come out of the ashes of Children on Stun, but this album has come along a long way since that incarnation. With this bright new release, they have plundered from styles as varied as techno, to funk to indie, as well as from within genres of goth itself. The result is a highly realised, mature release, which still manages to come with an idiosyncratic stamp which is totally its own.

Quirkiness there is here, most notably in the first and last tracks, in case there is any doubt The Spares lack a sense of humour, whilst the techno edge is represented by Undefeated.

Tracks like Seahorses, on the other hand, sound as though they mean it; this is good and sinister, with a Gitane Demone edge supplied by the guest female vocals.

Highlights for me include Dolly Rocker and Heaven with a Gun. The latter sounds like the kind of dark funky number you play at the end of musky

Summer nights, whilst Dolly Rocker is a compulsively catchy number; hit material, this should get you on the dance floor if nothing does. And in case there is any doubts of the goth roots behind this CD, then check out Pretty Fine Timebomb again; here are the driven drum rhythms so reminiscent of Zombified, yet here this is so 2000. Ok, I made that last inane comment up because I feel lazy now.

I also liked the menacing use of background bass in Driller Killer; this has to be more than a passing nod to Dream Disciples, circa Cure for the Pain.

You really should investigate yourself. No, there really is nothing new under the sun...but there is nothing contrived about this; it comes with conviction, and this is what gives Tired and Bizarre the edge in terms of originality.
Recommended.

**WOMB: INTERVIEW WITH "THE SEVENTH SEAL"
FANZINE**

Womb is the one-man project of Greg Ferrari from the UK, and his debut album, Unclean, is set very much in the post-punk gothic mould. Here, he answers a few questions put to him by the Poison Quill.



Firstly - what's in a name? What made you choose this as a name for your band?
There's no special meaning - it just seemed to fit the mood of the music somehow. The first demo tape was called "*Babies For Sale!*" and so it's sort of linked to that. It was also a word that cropped up in the lyrics a couple of times.

What do you see as your main aim in terms of musical expression, as artists?
"Expression" and "artist" are not really words that I'd associate myself with. They have too many negative, pretentious connotations and if anything, I look on Womb as an anti-art project, a study of real life. Mind you, that sounds a bit arty itself, doesn't it? I really should think things through a bit more. Anyway, my main aim is just to reach as many people with the music, to release as much decent music and do as many gigs as possible before I get old and sick. I don't want to please people. I'd rather make them slightly uncomfortable. It's better to be hated than thought reasonable.

Who are your main idols, influences, respectively?
I don't know if I really have any "idols" as such anymore. I certainly did as a kid; people on TV or footballers. An idol is presumably someone you want to be, or be like, and these days if I have them, it would be people I know; people who have certain personal qualities which I don't. I'd like to be as decent as my Dad, as unselfish as my girlfriend, as intelligent as my brother...
As far as influences go, I'm still influenced by music, but (unfashionable as it may sound) I don't think those influences have changed a great deal over time. I'm still influenced by those whose music has affected me most in my life; Joy

Division, The Cure, The Smiths, Siouxsie and The Banshees, The Fall, Rozz Williams. OK, so there's nothing terribly contemporary there, but I don't think I'm just stuck in the past when I say that music has got worse over the last 20 years. It quite simply has done.

And what do you most despise or deplore as musicians?

I love this question. I despise so generously.

I despise those who abuse their position of power (because that is what music gives - a captive audience, a license to invade peoples' homes and heads) by writing meaningless music without originality. Such music is based on the need to please others, to be accepted or to be loved.

I despise lyrics that bear no relevance to human reality, words that mean nothing to anyone and have their pointlessness defended by some pathetic notion of "poetry".

I despise over-elaboration, too many notes, too many chords, and too many changes. Anyone who learns how to play a guitar properly should have it confiscated.

I deplore the fact that hippie has triumphed over punk, that image has triumphed over content, and that safe, vile predictability has destroyed any public yearning for intelligent alternatives.

How did you get together in the first place, and who plays what?

Womb has been, and will probably always be, a solo project on my part. I met Joanne after the first Womb gig (a solo affair) and she offered to play bass on a live basis in future, which she has now done successfully on many occasions. I'm currently looking for a live guitarist.

What kind of a response have you had to your album, Unclean? Are you pleased with the response you have had so far?

Well, nobody had heard of Womb before it came out, so shifting 400 albums in a year is pretty good going, I suppose. Fanzine reviews and stuff have been very positive, for which I am eternally grateful. These people do a thankless, but extremely important job, very well in my opinion.

My only regret is the distinct lack of multi-million pound record deal. There's always time... Really, though, it's a pain in the backside knowing that you've got stuff you want to release but can't because you've got to wait until your Barclaycard bill looks a bit less scary.

What future plans do you have. Any more releases in the pipeline?

Womb featured on a split CD (five songs each) along with *Leisure Hive* and *Naevus* entitled "This is Not Failure" a few months ago. Should be on general release pretty soon.

The second full-length Womb album is more or less finished. So I've just got to wait until someone offers to pay for its production, or until I get a very big bag

of cash from somewhere. I'd like to think that it will be out before the end of this summer, one way or another.

Have you ever travelled abroad, and if you could, where would you most like to go?

Yes, we had a gig in Germany in October, which was great. We were treated very well and I'd love to go back one day. Other than that, I'm hoping to get some gigs sorted out in Italy, which for me would be a dream come true (going back to my roots, you see).

How do you see the music scene in the UK?

Very, very bad indeed. Almost hopeless. It's time people started to treat music with the respect and importance that it deserves. If music is something in the background when you have dinner parties, if music is something you occasionally tap your foot to whilst watching TV, if music is something that makes you feel "nice", then there is something seriously wrong with you. Buy a Womb CD today. If you're skint, just tape it off someone else.

You can contact Greg for more information about Womb and their album *Unclean*, at Womb@hmq92.freemove.co.uk or at 11 Pine Crescent Brentwood Essex
CM13 1JE



METAL REVIEWS

EVERGREY - SOLITUDE. DOMINANCE. TRAGEDY

*Hall of Sermon, dist.focusion,
iris@focusion.de*

This is Evergrey's second release, and was produced with the help of King Diamond guitarist, Andy La Rocque. The aim within this album was to 'cover the complete spectrum of modern metal, and to steer clear of fantasy macho and false themes.'

I would say they have succeeded. This is a highly operatic album, very much in the tradition of Hall of Sermon. There are pomp touches throughout tracks such as Nosferatu and The Shocking Truth, effected in good part to the melodic crashes of guitars. The Gregorian-type intro complete with bells adds to the atmosphere on tracks such as She Speaks to the Dead, whilst the delicate harp strings on Words Mean Nothing, are simply a treat. This should therefore, certainly appeal to the goth metallers amongst you.

This is not to say that there is anything effete about this album. It has all the balls that any devout metallor could wish for, with strong riff sequences, aggressive drums and rousing choruses. Somehow, the vocals reminded me of Nazareth.

Solitude Dominance Tragedy, also seems to have built on the strengths of the first Evergrey release, which was reviewed in the first edition of The Seventh Seal' i.e. in producing intelligent metal with an edge of atmosphere. This however, is a lot more direct, and dramatic. Well recommended.

WHORES OF BABYLON - KING FEAR

*Necropolis Records
Necrop@necropolisrec.com*



This Helsinki-based band has released a new 10-track album of so-called apocalyptic rock under their new label, Necropolis.

It comes with dirty guitars throughout, and sombre vocals; a sort of punk-tinged metal, with chunky, raucous delivery; the style reminds me of a less brutal Therapy? (the Hoover-like guitars are more muted, the general tempo more chugging).

The second track Radio Werewolf, which on reflection, may just be a piss-take, includes samples from howling wolves (real ones?), whilst a folksy, reedy pipe graces the title track. Exit Eden, Sol Niger and Fey are the highlights of the album for me, as they are delivered with more passion and energy; the rest seems to be a little more muted.

The themes to the lyrics, about occultism, drugs etc, do make this the kind of album that should appeal to Bad Boys and girls, or at least those who like these kinds of pretensions to their music. This is not really a style that appeals to me, though the mood here is certainly muggy and decadent enough.

The Final Trumpet News and Information

Hall of Sermon

EVERGREY will hit the road in April. Tour dates for LACRIMOSRA include: **LACRIMOSA**; (Hall Of Sermon) 08. June D Krefeld - Kulturfabrik (Warm Up Show) (Infos & Tickets for Krefeld ONLY: +49-40-432 833 22) 09. June D Leipzig - Wave-Gotik-Treffen Pfingsten 2000 **MONACO X** (Nova Media) June: Leipzig - Wave-Gotik-Treffen Pfingsten 2000 (tbc) August...Belgium - EUROROCK Festival (tbc)
Upcoming Releases:
MONACO X 'Gezeiten' April/May (h-musix/Nova Media)
LOVE LIKE BLOOD 'Enslaved & Condemned' 5. June (Hall Of Sermon)
DREAMS OF SANITY 'The Game' - fall 2000 (Hall Of Sermon)
THE BREATH OF LIFE new album - the (Hall Of Sermon)
ARTROSIS new album - the (Hall Of Sermon)

ZILLO Festival News

Change of Date
According to information received recently, the date for the festival is not on the 5-6th August as originally advertised, but on the 1st-2nd September, but still in Cologne, and the Zillo team apologise for any confusion caused.

EIBON NEWS

Watch out for the next EIBON releases: **NEVER KNOWN** "On the edge of forever"
THE FROZEN AUTUMN "The pale collection"
SIGILLUM S "Tba"
NOTHING "The grey subaudible"
rberchi@galactica.it
<http://www.thais.it/eibon>

ATTRITION

Have two new releases: **HERETIC ANGELS**, their first ever live album and is out this week on Trinity Records.
Recorded live on last years US tour, in a strictly limited edition of 666 copies. You will find a sample track at www.mp3.com/attrition. Secondly there is **THE HAND THAT FEEDS**, an album of remixes, including exclusive remixes from , amongst others, Chris n' Cosey, In The Nursery, Dance or Die, New Mind, Regenerator, Stromkern, and various techno and drum n bass. It is to be the debut for Invisible Records, our new US label. www.invisiblerecords.com and will also be available on Trinity for Europe, by May.
WWW.GOTHCON.COM Martin is appearing as special panel guest at this years Gothcon festival, March 18th & 19th in Atlanta, USA. Check their website for full details of itinerary and events....
Live shows confirmed so far...
Fri. May 5th - Markthalle, Hamburg, Germany, with In The Nursery.
Sun. May 28th - Convergence 6 - Seattle, USA
MERCHANDISE. Check the web site for full details and for latest news, information and bargains.
Martin Bowes.
info@attrition.co.uk
www.attrition.co.uk

The Coroner

The Coroner has a CD of sampler of gothic music from various artists in Russia. If I get mine safely, I will review These in the next issue of my zine.
Contact the Coroner at coroner@aha.ru
C/O Sergey Merenkov PO Box 129 Moscow

The Final Trumpet: News and Information

Nightbreed

Now have a shop, opened amidst much fanfare on the 1st April, followed by party with guest bands such as Killing Miranda. Check out the Nightbreed website for more information about label releases, and their comprehensive mail-order list: <http://www.nightbrd.demon.co.uk>

Resurrection

Are also a label, shop and mail-order service; Resurrection Records
73 Parkway LONDON NW11 7PP,
www.resurrection-rec.demon.co.uk

DarkBeat Records

I understand the latest project on this label involves exes and current members of the bands looked at here, and is called Putra-Chic, and they are very cutting-edge.

Sanctuary

Sanctuary put on festivals, gigs and parties in Switzerland, including one on the 15th April with Faith and the Muse and Cadra Ash, with party afterwards on the 15th April. They are therefore an indispensable source of information for any Goth living in or near Switzerland, and they have a mailing list, which can be reached at <http://www.sanctuary.ch>

Gotik Treffen, Leipzig

Bands playing include Lacrimosa, Love Like Blood, In the Nursery, Brother Orchid, Killing Miranda, Arcana Obsura, Xmos, Dreadful Shadows, Mark Almond, Midnight Configuration, Passion Play, Sigue Sigue Sputnik, S.P.O.C.K., Sunshine Blind, House of Usher, and loads more, plus the usual programme of activities. Contact

www.wave-gotik-treffen-de for more information. June 9-12th.

Edinburgh

Want to know where to go in Edinburgh? Wargoth can tell you. For info about clubs, shops, contacts, email wargoth@netscape.net

Zines

I have heard very little on the zine front, recently. See the back page for information on a new English-speaking zine due to be published from Hungary, **Hypnos&Thanatos**. **Tajtekos Lapok** are, as far as I can tell, still going; it includes interviews with Xymox, Mantra, Penitent, as well as a lot of information, translated into Hungarian from various sources. You can read the original English translation of the Mantra interview on my website, at <http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Exhibit/5981/>; Gelka can be contacted at tajtlangelka@nexus.hu, or at Budapest 11 Fazekas utca 8. 2/2. 1027. Tony Young has a new UK-based zine called **Black Harvest**, Issue 3 of which is reputedly out now. Contact Tony at tony.young@net.nile.com for more info, at PO Box 292 Huddersfield W. Yorkshire HD1 4YF.

Birthcharts and Tarot readings

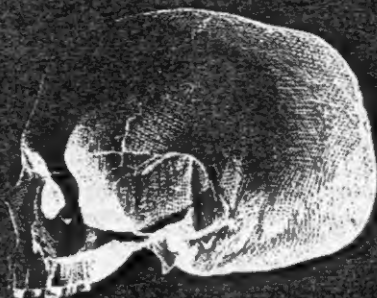
Are still available from me, as well as copies of some of the artwork to be found in this zine. IRC to address on front page for more info.

And that is your lot for now! See you in the Summer. Poison Quill.

HYPNOS&THANATOS

M A G A Z I N E

FIRST ISSUE FROM MARCH 11 OF 2000



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'And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour...'